

porters by Mr. Catton, R.A., who being a skilful painter of animals, but quite ignorant of the science of heraldry (many of the arms, it was said are incorrectly given), gave the supporters every variety of attitude, so as to contribute to a novel and pleasing pictorial effect. This course was much calculated to mislead many who possessed some knowledge of drawing, but were ignorantly indifferent to the correct heraldic expression and meaning.

The lecturer contended, that if one person may change the attitude of supporters for the sake of pictorial effect, another would be equally justified in changing colours or in making still greater deviations. Heraldry, he asserted, mainly consists of imitations of natural forms, but which are nearly always made amenable to symbolic and conventional treatment. In cases such as a stag, horse, or eagle "proper," nature may be, in many respects, faithfully copied from natural bodies, but it will be found that each of these is frequently placed side by side with a symbolic form, such as a wivern, dragon, &c., which must be depicted according to the laws of heraldry. Instances in illustration of these views were offered. The Duke of Devonshire has for supporters "two stags proper," in which case, colour, and form may be true to nature, but the attitude remains heraldic. The Duke of Northumberland has one gold and one blue lion, which, if painted green, belong to the Earl of Roseberry; or, if red, to the Duke of Bedford. Several similar cases were cited. Regarding proportion or relative size, Mr. Partridge observed, would also tend to produce anomalies, and thus went far to prove that they were never intended as pictures of natural history, but as symbolical distinctions, treasured by their possessors from feelings of high honour. Examples were adduced of helms of unequal sizes, which are brought side by side in arms, as a falcon and an elephant, a lion and a cock, for supporters, and others were named as applying to crests, quarterings, &c.

It was explained, that supporters are attached to all arms of peers, and that, with a few exceptions, they do not pertain to those of commoners. The lecturer then noticed the opinions sometimes held, that the extravagant forms of animals used in architectural decorations, as well as in heraldry, are efforts during a barbarous period, when the persons employed could do no better, and which, therefore, ought not to be followed in the present advanced state of manipulative skill; but he argued that this is an erroneous view, and that the human figure and animals were depicted with great fidelity, together with no small knowledge of symbolical art, upon ancient embroidered vestments, stained glass, and illuminated missals. He considered that the apparent eccentricity proceeded from causes unmet at the present day, and that many forms were devised to be repulsive of evil spirits and demoniacal influences. The form and size of shields, with some other features in heraldry, were pointed out for the purpose of illustrating its importance historically, referring to Winchester School, Eton College, and other buildings, as well as to stained-glass windows at Chichester, Bokerly, and St. George's Chapel, Windsor. As an example of family history recounted in the present century, a view was exhibited of the Duke of Bedford's dining-room, in which Mr. Partridge decorated the panelling with shields, bearing arms descriptive of all the marriages in the Russell family. He also mentioned that he had been employed by Mr. Mercey to emblazon correctly the arms of each personage in Shakespeare's play of "King John."

The paper concluded with some useful suggestions for the appropriate introduction of heraldic ornament; and stated, that before now, a shield bearing arms, placed on the frame to a portrait, had in itself formed an important link in establishing a perfect chain of legal evidence.

This being the last evening of the session, the meetings were adjourned to October next.

COMPETITION.—Designs are wanted for a workhouse for the City of London Poor Law Union, to accommodate 1,000 adult inmates, classified according to rule; the architect of the first selected design to carry it into execution, and those of the second and third to have premiums of 100*l.* and 50*l.*

WHO BUILT THE BATALHA.

Sta.—The correspondent of the *Athenæum* quoted by you, in his observations on the church of the Batalha, says, "I believe Murphy in his work endeavours to show that this abbey was the design of an English architect," an opinion, he adds, at variance with "Portuguese critics" and "the archives." Now I have examined pretty closely the sixty-one folio pages of Murphy's work, and find there is no mention of the country or name of the architect, except in these general terms, "He (the king) invited from distant countries the most celebrated architects that could be found," &c.

There is, however, an "additional note" at the foot of the last page (list of subscribers) furnished to Mr. Murphy by the Rev. Herbert Hill, chaplain to the British factory at Lisbon, quoting from Luis de Suiza and others that "the architect was an Irishman named David Blacket."

It may be desirable to state, that nearly forty pages out of the sixty-one of Murphy's work, are a translation from the work of *de Suiza*.

Taking this translation and Mr. Murphy's drawings of the church together, the inference can be clearly established that either English or Irish men were employed at a very early stage of the work. In page sixty, I read as follows:—"Near the entrance of the church are the names of the following workmen who are there interred:" "First, master workmen for the windows;" there are five names given, the fifth is thus quoted:—"Mester Whitaker, a stranger."

Now this name is common both to England and Ireland. In plate 2, figure 37, are drawn characters, which Mr. Murphy "found engraved on different parts of the church of Batalha." One of these characters is of this form W or M.W., which without any unreasonable stretch of conjecture, may be taken to denote the mark of "Mester Whitaker."

I am, Sir, &c.,

Gorey, 24th Aug., 1847. JOHN KELLY.

VALUE OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

By some, the Museum is looked upon as a great plaything or playhouse for the people. Be it so; we should be willing to take the matter on that footing, for it is no mean thing to furnish pastime for a people. Among the chief duties of a government, are to provide for the amusement of the people; and if men who are hard-worked in their several callings, can have a day's pleasure in a museum, and can have given to them new thoughts, which shall fill their minds in many days of toil, this is a great thing. Discontent is one of the greatest evils which any government has to withstand, even where bodily evil, hunger, and want are not felt. The gloomy away of the Independents broke down mostly from this cause; and the people hastily changed a good government for a bad one at the Restoration, because they were deadened and disheartened by the want of their accustomed pleasures. The playhouse, the bear-garden, and the fair were closed, the fiddler and the ballad-singer were put down, holidays were forbidden, and although plenty reigned at home, and glory crowned our arms abroad, the people were sullen and unhappy. In times of want, workmen are ever upon to be led astray by mob orators and agitators, to whom, when in full work, they will not listen. As it is with one, so it is with many; when the mind is heavy and the heart faint, the man himself gives way to a trifling sorrow, and sinks from bad to worse; whereas, where he but upheld, he would overcome every hardship. More or less, the same thing is to be seen at all times, and we feel sure that we are always doing good when we are yielding pleasure to the old or to the young. Happy feelings are the mainspring of good deeds. As it has been acknowledged by the greatest statesmen, that it is desirable to find pastime for the people, so it should be given usefully. The bloody shows of gladiators, or the beastly games of the bear-garden or the prize-ring, will give pleasure to those who are called enlightened Romans or enlightened Englishmen; the gambling cock or quail fight or horse race may prove still more enticing, but no one good feeling is awakened or strengthened, and no bad one weakened or quelled. The love of the good, the true, the

great, and the beautiful is that which should always be kept before the people, from their childhood to their death, in all outward forms and shapes. It should never be thought that education is the time of schooling in boyhood, but it should be remembered that in its rightful meaning of "bringing up" a man, it is being carried on at all times, in all places, and by all means. The eye, the ear, the touch, the taste, the smell are always on the watch learning something,—and if not good, they are learning evil. Thus habits, which cannot be shaken or undone, are shaped slowly and unknown, and fetters are welded which chain the mind in the doing of good or evil. If mankind are to be thoughtful and careful in their deeds and thoughts, it is becoming that in every thing we should keep sight of goodness, of truth, of beauty, and of greatness, for the Almighty maker of all has done this in every thing, from the smallest being, hardly seen by Ehrenberg under the most powerful microscope, to the great bulk of the mastodon or the most dreaded beast which ever stalked the earth. If mankind are not to be taught to think, at least we should take all means of giving them right habits.—*Civil Engineers' Journal*.

WESTMINSTER COURT OF SEWERS.

A SPECIAL COURT of sewers was held on Friday last; Capt. Bagge in the chair.

The Sanatory Improvement of the Parishes of St. John and St. Margaret, Westminster.—Mr. Phillips, the surveyor, presented a report on the state of the above districts, from which we take the following:—

"The drainage of Whitehall, of the great offices of state in Downing-street, and of the several streets between Whitehall and the intended new Victoria-street, is in the worst condition, the sewers being very old, in a ruinous state, and, consequently, choking up with filth. Previously to any effective steps being taken to remedy the many evils in drainage of the above localities, or for affording a proper outlet for the new sewer proposed to be built along Victoria-street, which sewer will be the base for the improvement of the drainage of the many almost undrained streets, courts, and alleys, abutting on, and communicating with, the said intended street. It is absolutely essential to carry on a new main line of sewer from the Thames to aid through the localities named above. From the depth at which it is proposed to be put in under low-water mark, I consider that carrying it along the front of Richmond-terrace will be for the best and most practicable route for its discharge into the river Thames, as that place presents a more direct, wide, and open thoroughfare than any other in the neighbourhood. The proposed sewer should be a circular one of 5 feet 6 inches in diameter, and one brick in thickness, from the river to Tothill-street, being a length of about 2,400 feet; and I estimate the cost at little short of 5,000*l.* As the proposed sewer is for the drainage of a district, the greater part of which is below the high-water level, it will be necessary to provide a complete system of penstocks and self-acting tide valves, to be fixed near the outlet.

Flushing sluices for scouring the sewer should be placed at distances of 500 feet apart. There is a great objection to the outlets of sewers discharging their contents openly on the banks of the river. Filthy deposits and mud banks are thus formed, and noxious effluvia exhaled from them. It is proposed to continue the covered sewer for a distance of about 200 feet from the base of the present embankment of Richmond-terrace, under the bed of the river into the main low-water stream of the tide, so as to discharge under low-water mark." The report further suggested, that the line proposed, as it passes through crown property at Richmond-terrace, should be communicated to the Commissioners of her Majesty's Woods and Forests, and that their assistance in carrying out the proposed improvement of the drainage should be sought for without delay.

Mr. Willoughby wished to know whether the Government had agreed to the plan of the proposed Victoria-street. This court, before moving, ought to be first assured that there was an intention to carry the street on the plan proposed. Mr. Hertslet (the clerk) said, some time since a letter had been received from Mr. Abraham, the architect to the Westminster Improvement Commissioners, stating that they were unable to proceed with any definite plan until the arrangements as to drainage had been made. It was then agreed that the report should be printed, and that a copy of it, with plans, should be transmitted to her Majesty's Commissioners of Woods and Forests, to obtain their sanction to the works proposed.